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MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT INCREASES ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR WINCHESTER RESIDENTS

Approval Given for Implementation of Hospital Redevelopment Project

WINCHESTER - The McGuinty government is increasing access to health care for Winchester area residents by authorizing the Winchester District Memorial Hospital to proceed with its redevelopment project, announced local MPP Jim Brownell today on behalf of Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman.

"This is the next critical step in our local healthcare "renaissance," said Brownell. "We are committed to ensuring all Ontarians have access to quality health care in their local hospitals, and that means access to quality emergency and operating room services. Today's announcement begins the process that will bring even better hospital services to the people of Winchester and area."

The project will include new critical care areas (ER, ICU and OR suites), diagnostic imaging, support and inpatient services, renovated rehabilitation and ambulatory care clinics.

The hospital has also been given approval to expand its project to include a fourth Labour/Delivery/Recovery room, a larger endoscopy suite, space for a new CT scanner, as well as upgrades to improve infection control.

"Winchester residents will have one of the finest health care facilities in the region," said Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman. "Today's investment means that we will be able to provide them with access to excellent ER and operating room services closer to home."

"We are thrilled that the government is taking this step to improve hospital services for the 90,000 residents served by the Winchester District Memorial Hospital," said Trudy Reid, Chief Executive Officer. "Our hospital and Foundation Boards of Directors, as well as the staff, physicians, volunteers and supporters of all kinds have worked long and hard, anticipating this day."

Winchester District Memorial Hospital is one of several projects approved under ReNew Ontario, the government's five year, $30 billion plus infrastructure investment plan, which commits more than $5 billion to health care infrastructure. ReNew Ontario is a plan to modernize and replace many of the province's hospitals, schools and post-secondary institutions. It will also support the provincial economy through investments in transportation, transit and research.

This is just one more example of how, working together, Ontarians have achieved results in health care. Other initiatives include:

- Investing $143 million in an Emergency Department Action Plan, which contains system-wide solutions to ensure emergency rooms stay open and increase capacity in the health care system to meet the needs of Ontario patients.

- Reducing wait times for five key health care services (hip and knee joint replacement, cataract surgeries, MRI exams, cancer surgeries and cardiac procedures).

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait time and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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